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ABSTRACT

This report draws together statistics from various sources to provide the user with a convenient and comprehensive portrayal of trends in the incidence of female family headship. Data are presented on the social and economic characteristics of women who head families and, in general, the conditions in which these women and the members of their families live. The estimates in this report for 1973 and some of those for 1960 and 1970 are based on data obtained in the current population survey of the Bureau of the Census. The present sample is spread over 461 cities comprising 923 counties and independent cities with coverage in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Some of the highlights involving female heads and the members of their families featured in the main part of the text include: Since 1960 there has been a 10 percent increase in the number of white female family heads and a 35 percent increase in the number of Negro female family heads. Between 1960 and 1973 the median age of women who headed families declined by about five years, with Negro family heads now about nine years younger than their white counterparts. There has been an increase in the proportion of female heads who are divorced, separated, or single and a decline in those who were widowed. (Author/JM)

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Issued July 1974

FEMALE FAMILY HEADS

- Growth
- Structure and composition
- Other demographic characteristics
- Economic characteristics
- Housing
- Primary individuals and subfamilies

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FEMALE FAMILY HEADS

INTRODUCTION

The number of women in the United States who are heads of their own families has increased by about 2.4 million since 1955. This number rose from 4.2 million in 1955 to 6.6 million in 1973. Moreover, the increase during the first third of the 1970's (1.0 million) has been nearly equal to the increase during the entire decade of the 1960's (1.1 million).

This very rapid increase, over the last several years, has fostered a growing concern among social scientists and government planners regarding changes in family structure and composition. Much has been written, usually speculative in nature, about the general breakdown of family living arrangements in the United States. Theories range from the position that a basic transformation in the structure of the institution of the family is occurring to the position that recent changes are only momentary and the structure of the nuclear family, as we now know it, will be maintained. However, although not all questions stimulated by the recent rise in female family headship can be adequately answered, it is important to closely inspect existing data to--identify the problems that confront these families affecting their social and economic well-being; determine the potential impact on society that would attend a continuation of the growth of these families; and isolate specific areas that need further investigation and research in order to more fully understand the implications of this increase.

This report draws together statistics from various sources to provide the user with a convenient and comprehensive portrayal of trends in the incidence of female family headship. Data are presented on the social and economic characteristics of women who head families and, in general, the conditions in which these women and the members of their families live. The report does not specifically attempt to deal with causative factors involved with the proportional increase in the number of women who head families because necessary empirical data on causation are lacking. Nevertheless, causation may be discussed in an inferential manner by viewing the changing demographic characteristics of female family heads.

For example, the fact that female family heads are younger, on the average, than in the past may be explained only in part by the changing age distribution of the population. What else can be cited as relevant causal variables? High rates of marital dissolution through divorce and separation certainly have had an impact on the growth of female heads. But, there has also been an increase in the number of female heads who are single which may be due in part to the retention of illegitimate children by their mothers and also to the liberalization of adoption procedures whereby single persons may now adopt children. Another important factor to be considered is the increased participation of women in the labor force. The availability of better and wider choices of jobs has led to increased economic independence among many women thus making it easier for them to maintain their own families on a self-sufficient basis.

Other factors possibly related to this growth are the increased availability of public assistance programs as well as the changing attitude toward independent living among women today.

In 1973 black women represented 28 percent of all female family heads and fully 35 percent of all black families. This situation has stimulated some speculation as to the extent to which the census undercounts for black men may have caused the estimate of black female family heads to appear larger than it really is. However, it is difficult to approach this particular problem from any definitive standpoint, simply because there is no way of determining the family relationship of these "missing men."

Moreover, many other related variables have possible degrees of influence in terms of their causal relationship to the rise in female family heads.

Some of the highlights involving female heads and the members of their families featured in the main part of the text include: Since 1960 there has been a 10 percent increase in the number of white female family heads and a 35 percent increase in the number of Negro female family heads; between 1960 and 1973 the median age of women who headed families declined by about 5 years, with Negro family heads now about

9 years younger than their white counterparts; there has been an increase in the proportion of female heads who were divorced, separated or single and a decline in those who were widowed; since 1970 the average size of these families has declined after it rose during the decade of 1960's; in 1973 a higher proportion of children under 18 years old lived with their mothers only than ever before, about 10 percent of white children and 38 percent of Negro children; women who headed families in 1973 reported higher levels of educational attainment than in the past; most female-headed families lived in metropolitan areas in 1973; even though their incomes have risen since 1960, the differential between the incomes of all families and the incomes of female-headed families has not declined; about 78 percent of the families headed by a woman had earnings of some kind in 1969; 38 percent of all persons living in families headed by a woman were below the low-income level in 1972, a decline since 1960; and, about one-half of the women who headed families in 1970 were home owners with 56 percent of the whites and 30 percent of the Negroes as owners.

SOURCE OF THE DATA

The focus in this report is on trends in female family headship between 1960 and 1973. Most tables show data for years 1973, 1970, and 1960. However, certain tables show data for only single points in time since comparable estimates were not available for years either preceding or following that date. Data are generally presented for all races, whites, and Negroes. With the exception of table 3, the data shown for Negroes for dates earlier than 1968 are actually estimates of the total nonwhite population. In most cases, in order to present a consistent time series, the estimates were derived from Current Population Survey data. However, some detailed estimates were available only from decennial census publications or publications from other sources. Because of the necessity of using alternative data sources, the estimates of total female family heads for the same point in time may differ slightly from table to table. For the user's convenience a complete list of the source references for each table is given in the section "References for Tables."

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

Source of data. The estimates in this report for 1973 and some of those for 1960 and 1970 (see references for tables) are based on data obtained in the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of the Census. The present sample is spread over 461 areas comprising 923 counties and independent cities with coverage in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Approximately 47,000 occupied households are eligible for interview each month. Of this number 2,000 occupied units, on the average, are visited but interviews are not obtained because the occupants are not found at home after repeated calls or are unavailable for some other reason. In addition to the 47,000, there are also about 8,000 sample units in an average month which are visited but are found to be vacant or otherwise not to be interviewed.

Between January 1967 and July 1972 the sample was spread over 449 areas comprising 863 counties and independent cities with coverage in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Approximately 47,000 occupied households were eligible for interview each month.

In 1960, the sample was spread over 330 areas comprising 638 counties and independent cities with coverage in the then 48 States and the District of Columbia. Approximately 35,000 occupied households were eligible for interview each month.

The remaining estimates for 1960 and 1970 are based on data obtained in the 1960 and 1970 Censuses of Population, respectively. For further information, see the publications listed in References for Tables.

The estimating procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of the weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, race, and sex. These independent estimates were based on statistics from the 1960 and 1970 Censuses of Population; statistics of births, deaths, immigration and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces.

Reliability of the estimates. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same schedules, instructions and enumerators. As in any survey work, the results are subject to errors of response and of reporting, as well as being subject to sampling variability.

The standard error is primarily a measure of sampling variability, that is, of the variations that occur by chance because a sample rather

than the whole of the population is surveyed. As calculated for this report, the standard error also partially measures the effect of response and enumeration errors, but it does not measure any systematic biases in the data. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the sample would differ from a complete census figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 90 out of 100 that this difference would be less than 1.6 times the standard error, and the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the standard error.

All statements of comparison appearing in the text are significant at a 1.6 standard error level or better, and most are significant at a level of more than 2.0 standard errors. This means that for most differences cited in the text, the estimated difference is greater than twice the standard error of the difference. Statements of comparison qualified in some way (e.g., by use of the phrase, "some evidence") have a level of significance between 1.6 and 2.0 standard errors.

The figures presented in tables A and B are approximations to the standard errors of various estimates shown in this report. In order to derive standard errors that would be applicable to a wide variety of items and could be prepared at a moderate cost, a number of approximations were required. As a result, the tables of standard errors provide an indication of the order of magnitude, rather than the precise standard error for any specific item. Table A contains the standard errors of estimates of the number of families, households, or unrelated individuals. Table A is used for items which can typically appear only once in a given household, e.g., "Number of household heads," or "Number of female household heads."

Table A. Standard Errors of Family, Household, or Unrelated Individual Estimates, 1973

(68 chances out of 100)

Size of estimate	Standard error	Size of estimate	Standard error
20,000.....	5,200	1,000,000....	36,000
30,000.....	6,400	2,500,000....	57,000
40,000.....	7,300	5,000,000....	79,000
50,000.....	8,200	10,000,000...	107,000
100,000.....	12,000	25,000,000...	147,000
250,000.....	18,000	50,000,000...	139,000
500,000.....	26,000		

Note: To estimate standard errors for CPS data for 1960, multiply these standard errors by 1.2.

Table B gives the standard errors of estimated percentages of families, households, or unrelated individuals. The reliability of an estimated percentage, computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator depends upon both the size of the percentage and the size of the total upon which the percentage is based. Estimated percentages are relatively more reliable than the corresponding estimates of the numerators of the percentages, particularly if the percentages are 50 percent or more.

Table B. Standard Errors of Estimated Percentages of Families, Households, or Unrelated Individuals, 1973

(68 chances out of 100)

Estimated percentages	Base of estimated percentages (thousands)									
	50	100	250	500	1,000	2,500	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000
1 or 99.....	1.6	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.12	0.07	0.05
2 or 98.....	2.3	1.6	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.07
5 or 95.....	3.6	2.5	1.6	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.11
10 or 90.....	4.9	3.5	2.2	1.6	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2
15 or 85.....	5.9	4.1	2.6	1.9	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2
20 or 80.....	6.6	4.6	2.9	2.1	1.5	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2
25 or 75.....	7.1	5.0	3.2	2.2	1.6	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2
35 or 65.....	7.8	5.5	3.5	2.5	1.7	1.1	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.2
50.....	8.2	5.8	3.7	2.6	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3

Note: To estimate standard errors for CPS data for 1955-1960, multiply these standard errors by 1.2.

Sampling errors of most data from the 5-, 15-, and 20-percent samples of the decennial censuses shown in this report are small enough to be disregarded and the standard errors of these data are not provided. These standard errors may be found in the appropriate census volumes. However, it should be remembered that data obtained from the Current Population Surveys and the Decennial Censuses are not entirely comparable. This is due in large part to differences in interviewer training and experience and in the differing survey processes. This is an additional component of error not reflected in the standard error tables. Therefore, caution should be used in comparing results between these different sources.

Note when using small estimates. Percentage distributions are shown in this report only when the base of the percentage is greater than 75,000. Because of the large standard errors involved, there is little chance that percentages would reveal useful information when computed on a smaller base. Estimated totals are shown, however, even though the relative standard errors of these totals are larger than those for the corresponding percentages. These smaller estimates are provided primarily to permit such combinations of the categories as serve each user's needs.

Illustration of the use of tables of standard errors. Table 1 of this report shows that there were 48,447,000 white families in 1973. Table A shows the standard error on an estimate of this size to be approximately 139,000. The chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimate would have been a figure differing from a complete census figure by less than 139,000. The chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would have differed from a complete census figure by less than 278,000.

Of these 48,447,000 white families, there were 4,672,000, or 9.6 percent families with female heads in 1973. Table B shows the standard error of 9.6 percent on a base of 48,447,000 to be approximately 0.2 percent. Consequently, chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimated 9.6 percent would be within 0.2 percentage points of a complete consus figure, and chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would be within 0.4 percentage points of a census figure; i.e., this 95 percent confidence interval would be from 9.2 to 10.0 percent.

Differences. For a difference between two sample estimates, the standard error is approximately equal to the square root of the sum of the squares of the standard errors of each estimate considered separately. This formula will represent the actual standard error quite accurately for the difference between two estimates of the same characteristic in two different areas, or for the difference between separate and uncorrelated characteristics in the same area. If, however, there is a high positive correlation between the two characteristics, the formula will overestimate the true standard error.

Illustration of the computation of the standard error of a difference. Table 1 of this report shows that in 1973, of an estimated 5,265,000 Negro families, 1,822,000, or 34.6 percent were families with female heads. Thus, the apparent difference in the percentage of families with white female heads and families with Negro female heads is 25.0 percent. The standard error of 9.6 percent of white families is 0.2 percent, as shown above. Table B shows the standard error on an estimate of 34.6 percent on a base of 5,265,000 to be approximately 0.8 percent. The standard error of the estimated difference of 25.0 percent is about $\sqrt{(.2)^2 + (.8)^2} =$ 0.8 percent. This means the chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimated difference based on the samples would differ from the change derived using complete census figures by less than 0.8 percentage points. The 68 percent confidence interval around the 25.0 percent difference is 24.2 to 25.8, i.e., 25.0 ± .8. A conclusion that the average estimate of the change derived from all possible samples lies within a range computed in this way would be correct for roughly 68 percent of all possible samples. The 95 percent confidence interval is 23.4 to 26.6 and thus we can conclude with 95 percent confidence that the percentage of Negro families with female heads in 1973 is actually greater than the percentage of white families with female heads in 1973.

Medians. The sampling variability of an estimated median depends upon the form as well as on the size of the distribution from which the median is determined. An approximate method for measuring the reliability of a median is to determine an interval about the estimated median, such that there is a stated degree of confidence that the median based on a complete census lies within the interval. The following procedure may be used to estimate confidence limits of a median based on sample data:

1. From table B determine the standard error of a 50 percent characteristic, using the appropriate base;
2. Add to and subtract from 50 percent the standard error determined in step (1);

3. Using the distribution of the characteristic, read off the confidence interval corresponding to the two points established in step (2).

A two standard error confidence interval may be determined by finding the values corresponding to 50 percent plus and minus twice the standard error determined in step (1).

Illustration of the computation of the standard error of a median. Table II shows that the median income for families headed by a woman in 1972 was $5,342. The size, or base, of the distribution from which this median was determined is 6,607,000 female family heads.

1. Table B shows that the standard error of 50 percent on a base of 6,607,000 is about 0.7 percent.

2. To obtain a two standard error confidence interval on the estimated median, initially add to and subtract from 50 percent twice the standard error found in step (1). This yields percentage limits of 48.6 and 51.4.

3. From table II it can be seen the 47.3 percent of all female headed families had incomes of $5,000 or under and an additional 8.2 percent was in the next interval of income ($5,000 to $5,999). By linear interpolation the lower limit on the estimate is found to be about:

$$\frac{48.6 - 47.3}{8.2} \times \$1,000 + \$5,000 = \$5,159$$

Similarly, the upper limit may be found by linear interpolation to be about:

$$\frac{51.4 - 47.3}{8.2} \times \$1,000 + \$5,000 = \$5,500$$

Thus, the 95 percent confidence interval ranges from $5,159 to $5,500.

I. GROWTH

During the last two decades there has been a rapid growth in the number of families in the United States headed by women. During the entire 1960 to 1970 decade the number of these families increased by about one million and during the first third of the 1970's the number has again increased by one million.

Between 1955 and 1973 the number of families in the United States headed by a woman increased by 56 percent, from 4.2 million in 1955 to 6.6 million in 1973. During the same period total families in the United States increased by 30 percent. White women in 1973 made up 71 percent of all female family heads while Negro women comprised 28 percent of female heads. However, white families with female heads as a proportion of all white families in 1973 was 10 percent while Negro families with female heads represented 35 percent of all Negro families.[1] Moreover, of the 2.4 million increase in all female-headed families since 1955, about one million, or 44 percent, were Negro families. Data on women of Spanish origin, available only since 1970, show that between 1970 and 1973 the percent of female heads to total families remained at a constant level of about 17 percent.

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[1]Preliminary results from the March 1974 Current Population Survey show that no statistically significant increase in these proportions occurred between 1973 and 1974. However, whether this portends a future decline or leveling off of the incidence of female family headship remains to be seen.

Table 1. FEMALE FAMILY HEADS AS PROPORTION OF ALL FAMILIES BY RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN: 1955 TO 1973

(Numbers in thousands)

Race, origin, and sex of head	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1965	1960	1955
All families	54,373	53,296	51,948	51,237	50,510	49,834	47,836	45,062	41,934
Families with female heads	6,607	6,191	5,950	5,580	5,439	5,373	5,006	4,494	4,225
Percent of all families	12.2	11.6	11.5	10.9	10.8	10.7	10.5	10.0	10.1
White families	48,447	47,641	46,535	46,022	45,437	44,814	43,081	40,828	38,170
Families with female heads	4,672	4,489	4,386	4,185	4,053	4,008	3,882	3,547	3,444
Percent of all families	9.6	9.4	9.4	9.1	8.9	8.9	9.0	8.7	9.0
Negro families	5,265	5,157	4,928	4,774	4,646	4,589	4,752	4,234	3,764
Families with female heads	1,822	1,642	1,506	1,349	1,327	1,272	1,125	947	781
Percent of all families	34.6	31.8	30.6	28.3	28.6	27.7	23.7	22.4	20.7
Families with a head of Spanish origin	2,312	2,057	1,954	1,956	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Families with female heads	386	355	329	331	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Percent of all families	16.7	17.3	16.8	16.9	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

NA Not available.

II. STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

Since 1960 there have been several changes in the demographic characteristics of female family heads and in the composition of their families. Many of these changes are logically interrelated. For example, the distribution of a population by marital status usually reflects the age composition of that population. Thus, since the age of female family heads has moved, over time, in the direction of younger women, it is not surprising that the marital status distribution of female heads now shows higher frequencies of women who are single, separated, or divorced rather than widowed, a marital status characteristic of older women.

This section presents data on the age and marital status of female family heads as well as data on the number of members and presence of children in their families.

The age of women who head families has declined since 1960. The median age of women who headed families in 1973 was about 45 years old, a decline in the median age of about 5 years since 1960 (table 2). Negro women who were family heads were about 9 years younger (38.7 years) than their white counterparts (47.9 years) in 1973; women of both races experienced a 5-year decrease in the median age since 1960. The proportion of female family heads under 30 years old increased from about 10 percent in 1960 to about 19 percent in 1973 while the proportion 55 years old and over decreased from about 41 percent in 1960 to 32 percent in 1973. Population growth in the age groups reflecting the principal increases in female heads has been only one of the factors responsible for the overall increase in female headship. Female family heads increased by 33 percent between 1960 and 1970 and by 18 percent between 1970 and 1973. The rate of increase for women under 35 years old exceeded the overall total increases for all women. More than likely the increase in heads among younger women is a function of many other variables as well as population growth, including changes in the marital status distribution of women.

Since 1960 there has been a decline in the proportion of female family heads who were widows and an increase in the proportion of female heads who were divorced or separated (table 3). Additionally, in recent years there has been a fairly large increase in the proportion of female heads who were reported as having never been married.

About one-half of all female family heads in 1973 were either divorced or separated due to marital discord. During the decade 1960 to 1970 the proportional increases for female heads who were divorced (79.2 percent) and separated (59.7 percent) were greater than those for any of the other marital status categories. However, during the period 1970 to 1973 the proportional increase for female heads who were single (39.0 percent) was about the same as the increases for divorced and separated women (36.1 percent and 37.3 percent, respectively). Among Negro women, the proportional increases for both the single (never married) and divorced were dramatic during the 1960 to 1970 period and the 1970 to 1973 period. The large increase during the last few years in the number of families with the head reported as single is a reflection of several developments, including an increase in the postponement of marriage, the continuing high rate of illegitimate births, and perhaps also an increasing tendency for mothers who have never married to report their marital status correctly. The proportion of female family heads who were married but their husband was absent for some reason other than separation decreased between 1970 and 1973; as a contributing factor, during this period, many thousands of married men who had served in the Vietnam conflict had returned home.

Table 4 presents data on trends since 1960 in the number of members in families headed by a woman. In 1973 the average number of members in families headed by a woman was 3.22 persons. White families headed by women had an average of about one less person per family than corresponding Negro families (2.94 for whites and 3.91 for Negroes).

The average number of own children under 18 years old in families with female heads did not change between 1970 and 1973 remaining close to a level of 1.25 children per family. It was 1.00 in 1960 (table 5). The proportion of female family heads who had no own children under 18 years old present in their homes declined since 1960, from 55 percent to 43 percent in 1973, even though the number of such families increased by half a million. The reason for this contrast is that the number of mothers who were heads of families increased much more rapidly--doubling their number from 1.9 million to 3.8 million in the 13 year span. As with presence of own children under 18, there has been an increase, since 1960, in the proportion of female-headed families with own children under 6 years

old present in the home, from 17 percent in 1960 to 23 percent in 1973 (table 6). Most women who had an own child under 6 had only one such child present in the home.

Obviously, the recent increases in female-headed families, coupled with the fact that a major portion of this increase was for women with children, have had an impact on the living arrangements of children in families with respect to the presence of parents. Since 1960, there has been a drop in the proportion of children who live with both parents (table 7). In 1960, 89 percent of the children under 18 years old in families lived with both parents. By 1973 this proportion had declined to 83 percent. During the same period the proportion living with their mother only increased from 8 percent to 14 percent. Similar patterns occurred for children under 6 years old. The proportion of these young children living with both parents declined from about 90 percent in 1960 to 84 percent in 1973 while the proportion living with only their mother increased from 7 percent to 13 percent.

White children living in families where both parents were present declined from 92 percent in 1960 to 88 percent in 1973 for children under 18 years old and from 94 percent to 90 percent for children under 6. The corresponding increases for children living with their mothers only were from 6 percent to 10 percent for children under 18 and from 5 percent to 8 percent for children under 6 years old.

The most pronounced changes in living arrangements were for Negro children, among whom those under 18 years old living with both mother and father declined from 69 percent to 52 percent between 1960 and 1973. Only about one-half of the Negro children under 6 years old lived with both parents in 1973 compared with 70 percent in 1960. Thirty-eight percent of the Negro children, both under 18 and under 6 years old, lived in families with a mother, but no father, present in 1973. In 1960 the proportions living with only their mothers were 21 percent and 19 percent for children under 18 and under 6, respectively.

These findings become more meaningful in the context that the proportion of young children (under 18) who were very young (under 6) diminished between 1960 and 1973 from 38 percent to only 30 percent. Since more of the young children were of school age, more of the mothers were able to work away from home and support themselves (and their children) while living apart from their children's father.

Table 2. AGE OF FEMALE FAMILY HEADS BY RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Age and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female family heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
Under 25 years	610	437	167	173	270	39.6	161.7
25 to 29 years	659	459	243	200	216	43.6	88.9
30 to 34 years	727	460	336	267	124	58.0	36.9
35 to 44 years	1,296	1,075	861	221	214	20.6	24.9
45 to 54 years	1,231	1,115	887	116	228	10.4	25.7
55 to 64 years	913	917	730	-4	187	-0.4	25.6
65 to 74 years	709	610	617	99	-7	16.2	-1.1
75 years and over	461	505	356	-44	149	-8.7	41.9
Median age	45.1	48.2	50.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Under 25 years	9.2	7.8	4.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
25 to 29 years	10.0	8.2	5.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
30 to 34 years	11.0	8.2	8.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
35 to 44 years	19.6	19.3	20.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
45 to 54 years	18.6	20.0	21.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
55 to 64 years	13.8	16.4	17.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
65 to 74 years	10.7	10.9	14.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
75 years and over	7.0	9.1	8.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female family heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
Under 25 years	333	283	112	50	171	17.7	152.7
25 to 29 years	406	295	154	111	141	37.6	91.6
30 to 34 years	466	293	224	173	69	59.0	30.8
35 to 44 years	857	749	645	108	104	14.4	16.1
45 to 54 years	935	870	718	65	152	7.5	21.2
55 to 64 years	726	744	604	-18	140	-2.4	23.2
65 to 74 years	555	525	531	30	-6	5.7	-1.1
75 years and over	395	426	319	-31	107	-7.3	33.5
Median age	47.9	50.4	52.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Negro female family heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
Under 25 years	261	150	55	111	95	74.0	(B)
25 to 29 years	247	160	89	87	71	54.4	79.8
30 to 34 years	255	165	112	90	53	54.5	47.3
35 to 44 years	400	319	216	81	103	25.4	47.7
45 to 54 years	270	237	169	33	68	13.9	40.2
55 to 64 years	181	164	126	17	38	10.4	30.2
65 to 74 years	145	81	86	64	-5	79.0	-5.8
75 years and over	63	74	37	-11	37	(B)	(B)
Median age	38.7	41.3	43.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

B Base less than 75,000.
X Not applicable.

Table 3. MARITAL STATUS OF FEMALE FAMILY HEADS BY RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Marital status and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female family heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
Single	848	610	487	238	123	39.0	25.3
Married, spouse absent	1,579	1,324	914	255	410	19.3	44.9
Separated	1,289	939	588	350	351	37.3	59.7
Other	290	385	326	-95	59	-24.7	18.1
Widowed	2,468	2,389	2,093	79	296	3.3	14.1
Divorced	1,712	1,258	702	454	556	36.1	79.2
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Single	12.8	10.9	11.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Married, spouse absent	23.9	23.7	21.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Separated	19.5	16.8	14.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Other	4.4	6.9	7.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Widowed	37.4	42.8	49.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Divorced	25.9	22.5	16.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female family heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
Single	468	385	391	83	-6	21.6	-1.5
Married, spouse absent	886	776	581	110	195	14.2	33.6
Separated	681	476	319	205	157	43.1	49.2
Other	205	300	262	-95	38	-31.7	14.5
Widowed	1,915	1,966	1,735	-51	231	-2.6	13.3
Divorced	1,403	1,058	599	345	459	32.6	76.6
Negro female family heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
Single	355	218	96	137	122	62.8	127.1
Married, spouse absent	660	535	333	125	202	23.4	60.7
Separated	394	456	269	138	187	30.3	69.5
Other	66	79	64	-13	15	-16.5	(B)
Widowed	513	403	358	110	45	27.3	12.6
Divorced	294	192	103	102	89	53.1	86.4

B Base less than 75,000.
X Not applicable.

Table 4. SIZE OF FAMILY FOR FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BY RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Size of family and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
SIZE OF FAMILY							
All female heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
2 persons	2,996	2,529	1,988	467	541	18.5	27.2
3 persons	1,584	1,331	1,014	253	317	19.0	31.3
4 persons	922	763	531	159	232	20.8	43.7
5 persons	506	441	295	65	146	14.7	49.5
6 persons	304	252	167	52	85	20.6	50.9
7 persons or more	295	265	203	30	62	11.3	30.5
Total persons	21,264	18,341	13,281	2,923	5,060	15.9	38.1
Mean number	3.22	3.29	3.17	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
2 persons	45.3	45.3	47.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
3 persons	24.0	23.9	24.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 persons	14.0	13.7	12.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
5 persons	7.7	7.9	7.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
6 persons	4.6	4.5	4.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
7 persons or more	4.5	4.7	4.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
2 persons	2,384	2,101	1,712	283	389	13.5	22.7
3 persons	1,151	1,050	824	101	226	9.6	27.4
4 persons	605	544	398	61	146	11.2	36.7
5 persons	269	269	196	-	73	-	37.2
6 persons	158	132	96	26	36	19.7	37.5
7 persons or more	105	90	83	15	7	16.7	8.4
Total persons	13,739	12,471	9,676	1,268	2,795	10.2	28.9
Mean number	2.94	2.98	2.93	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Negro female heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
2 persons	575	408	276	167	132	40.9	47.8
3 persons	407	272	190	135	82	49.6	43.2
4 persons	290	214	133	76	81	35.5	60.9
5 persons	226	169	99	57	70	33.7	70.7
6 persons	143	118	71	25	47	21.2	(B)
7 persons or more	181	168	120	13	48	7.7	40.0
Total persons	7,125	5,691	3,605	1,434	2,086	25.2	57.9
Mean number	3.91	4.22	4.05	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

- Represents zero.
B Base less than 75,000.
X Not applicable.

Table 5. FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD BY RACE OF HEAD: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Number of own children under 18 and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
Own children under 18:							
With no own children under 18	2,809	2,655	2,305	154	350	5.8	15.2
With own children under 18	3,798	2,925	1,891	873	1,034	29.8	54.7
1 own child under 18	1,472	1,051	785	421	266	40.1	33.9
2 own children under 18	1,082	826	510	256	316	31.0	62.0
3 own children under 18	612	497	286	115	211	23.1	73.8
4 or more own children under 18	632	552	311	80	241	14.5	77.5
Total own children under 18	8,350	6,895	4,198	1,455	2,697	21.1	64.2
Mean number	1.26	1.24	1.00	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Own children under 18:							
With no own children under 18	42.5	47.6	54.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With own children under 18	57.5	52.4	45.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
1 own child under 18	22.3	18.8	18.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
2 own children under 18	16.4	14.8	12.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
3 own children under 18	9.3	8.9	6.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 or more own children under 18	9.6	9.9	7.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
Own children under 18:							
With no own children under 18	2,202	2,178	1,910	24	268	1.1	14.0
With own children under 18	2,470	2,007	1,396	463	611	23.1	43.8
1 own child under 18	1,047	785	635	262	150	33.4	23.6
2 own children under 18	751	628	396	123	232	19.6	58.6
3 own children under 18	389	326	202	63	124	19.3	61.4
4 or more own children under 18	282	268	164	14	104	5.2	63.4
Total own children under 18	4,968	4,184	2,803	784	1,381	18.7	49.3
Mean number	1.06	1.00	0.85	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Negro female heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
Own children under 18:							
With no own children under 18	567	452	395	115	57	25.4	14.4
With own children under 18	1,255	898	495	357	403	39.8	81.4
1 own child under 18	406	258	150	148	108	57.4	72.0
2 own children under 18	318	194	114	124	80	63.9	70.2
3 own children under 18	199	168	84	31	84	18.5	100.0
4 or more own children under 18	334	278	147	56	131	20.1	89.1
Total own children under 18	3,183	2,645	1,395	538	1,250	20.3	89.6
Mean number	1.75	1.96	1.57	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

X Not applicable.

Table 6. FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OLD AND RACE OF HEAD: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Number of own children under 6 and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
Own children under 6:							
With no own children under 6	5,069	4,470	3,500	599	970	13.4	27.7
With own children under 6	1,538	1,110	696	428	414	38.6	59.5
1 own child under 6	1,033	696	(NA)	337	(NA)	48.4	(NA)
2 own children under 6	372	288	(NA)	84	(NA)	29.2	(NA)
3 own children under 6	106	106	(NA)	-	(NA)	-	(NA)
4 or more own children under 6	27	20	(NA)	7	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Total own children under 6	2,150	1,702	1,139	448	563	26.3	49.4
Mean number	0.33	0.31	0.27	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Own children under 6:							
With no own children under 6	76.7	80.1	83.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
With own children under 6	23.3	19.9	16.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
1 own child under 6	15.6	12.5	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
2 own children under 6	5.6	5.2	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
3 own children under 6	1.6	1.9	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 or more own children under 6	0.4	0.4	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
Own children under 6:							
With no own children under 6	3,795	3,518	2,866	277	652	7.9	22.7
With own children under 6	877	667	440	210	227	31.5	51.6
1 own child under 6	632	448	(NA)	184	(NA)	41.1	(NA)
2 own children under 6	198	172	(NA)	26	(NA)	15.1	(NA)
3 own children under 6	40	43	(NA)	-3	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
4 or more own children under 6	8	4	(NA)	4	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Total own children under 6	1,149	924	664	225	260	24.4	39.2
Mean number	0.25	0.22	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Negro female heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
Own children under 6:							
With no own children under 6	1,198	917	634	281	283	30.6	44.6
With own children under 6	624	432	256	192	176	44.4	68.8
1 own child under 6	370	240	(NA)	130	(NA)	54.2	(NA)
2 own children under 6	172	115	(NA)	57	(NA)	49.6	(NA)
3 own children under 6	63	62	(NA)	1	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
4 or more own children under 6	19	15	(NA)	4	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Total own children under 6	950	737	475	193	282	25.5	59.4
Mean number	0.52	0.56	(NA)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

- Represents zero.
B Base less than 75,000.
NA Not available.
X Not applicable.

Table 7. CHILDREN IN FAMILIES BY PRESENCE OF PARENTS BY AGE AND RACE OF CHILDREN: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Presence of parents and race	1973	1970	1960[1]	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
ALL RACES							
Total children under 18 years old in families	67,520	68,681	62,873	-1,161	5,808	-1.7	9.2
Living with both parents	55,807	57,744	55,895	-1,937	1,849	-3.4	3.3
Living with mother only	9,272	7,979	5,111	1,293	2,868	16.2	56.1
Percent of all children in families	13.7	11.6	8.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	821	1,339	726	-518	613	-38.7	84.4
All other	1,619	1,619	1,141	-	478	-	41.9
Total children under 6 years old in families	20,393	20,761	24,135	-368	-3,374	-1.8	-14.0
Living with both parents	17,186	17,724	21,786	-538	-4,062	-3.0	-18.6
Living with mother only	2,592	2,264	1,625	328	639	14.5	39.3
Percent of all children in families	12.7	10.9	6.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	117	314	184	-197	130	-62.7	70.7
All other	498	459	540	39	-81	8.5	-15.0
WHITE							
Total children under 18 years old in families	57,125	58,506	54,492	-1,381	4,014	-2.4	7.4
Living with both parents	50,150	51,566	50,098	-1,416	1,468	-2.7	2.9
Living with mother only	5,514	5,012	3,386	502	1,626	10.0	48.0
Percent of all children in families	9.7	8.6	6.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	614	1,040	552	-426	488	-41.0	88.4
All other	846	888	456	-42	432	-4.7	94.7
Total children under 6 years old in families	17,053	17,552	20,658	-499	-3,106	-2.8	-15.0
Living with both parents	15,399	15,764	19,347	-365	-3,583	-2.3	-18.5
Living with mother only	1,404	1,333	971	71	362	5.3	37.3
Percent of all children in families	8.2	7.6	4.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	79	236	134	-157	102	-66.5	76.1
All other	170	219	206	-49	13	-22.4	6.3
NEGRO							
Total children under 18 years old in families	9,432	9,267	8,381	165	886	1.8	10.6
Living with both parents	4,904	5,441	5,797	-537	-356	-9.9	-6.1
Living with mother only	3,583	2,853	1,725	730	1,128	25.6	65.4
Percent of all children in families	38.0	30.8	20.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	199	277	174	-78	103	-28.1	59.2
All other	745	696	685	49	11	7.0	1.6
Total children under 6 years old in families	2,984	2,905	3,477	79	-572	2.7	-16.5
Living with both parents	1,496	1,707	2,439	-211	-732	-12.4	-30.0
Living with mother only	1,136	895	654	241	241	26.9	36.9
Percent of all children in families	38.1	30.8	18.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living with father only	36	72	50	-36	22	(B)	(B)
All other	316	231	334	85	-103	36.8	-30.8

B Base less than 75,000.
X Not applicable.
[1]Includes a small number of heads and wives of heads of families and subfamilies not included for 1970 and 1973.

III. OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Female family heads today are better educated than in the past, their families generally move more frequently than families where both a husband and wife are present, and most live in metropolitan areas of the United States.

Women who were female family heads in 1973 had higher levels of educational attainment than those who were heads in 1960 (table 8). About one-half of all female family heads in 1973 had completed at least 4 years of high school while only about 32 percent of the women heading families in 1960 had reached comparable levels of educational attainment. During the same time period the proportion of women who had completed 8 or fewer years of school declined from 47 percent in 1960 to 27 percent in 1973. Having higher levels of educational attainment has probably enabled many of these women to obtain employment in many of the occupations where currently employed women tend to be concentrated.

Since age is inversely related to levels of educational attainment in the adult population, the level of educational achievement for each year shown was higher for women under 45 years old than for those 45 years old and over. In 1973, 58 percent of female heads under 45 years old had completed at least a high school education, whereas only about 43 percent of the heads 45 years old or older had a comparable level of attainment. The corresponding proportions for 1960 were 42 percent for women under 45 years old and 26 percent for women 45 years and older. The general rise in educational attainment since 1960 for persons of corresponding age groups and the fact that the representation of younger women among female family heads has increased over the past 13 years (table 2) have contributed to the overall rise in educational levels among female family heads.

As with educational attainment, the age of the family head is an important determinant in the disposition of a family to move for families where there is a married couple present as well as for families with female heads. The mobility rate between 1970 and 1973 for husband-wife families where the head was under 25 years old was 85 percent, a rate which drops to 16 percent at ages 45 to 64 (table 9). Similarly, for families headed by a woman the mobility rate for heads under 25 years old was 77 percent compared with a rate of 23 percent for those women aged 45 to 64. Beyond the youngest and oldest ages (under 25 years and 65 years old and over) the mobility rate for families headed by women was higher than for husband-wife families. A possible explanation is that most of the married couples tend to "settle down" soon after marriage, whereas most of the women become family heads through widowhood or divorce, and these events (particularly divorce) very often necessitate changes in residence. Moreover, female family heads may not tend to develop as strong a sense of community commitment as do husband-wife families. Most residential movement among both types of families occurs by changing residence within the county of current residence.

Although female family heads have a high rate of residential mobility, no statistically significant change occurred in the distribution of these families by metropolitan-nonmetropolitan residence between 1968 and 1973 when race is not considered as a variable. However, when race is introduced some changes and trends can be seen. There has been a decline in the proportion of white female-headed families living in central cities and a corresponding increase in the proportion living in metropolitan areas surrounding central cities. There was no significant change in the proportion of white female heads who lived outside metropolitan areas. By contrast, for Negro female-headed families the proportion living in central cities increased from 64 percent in 1968 to 69 percent in 1973, while a corresponding decrease occurred in the proportion living outside metropolitan areas, from 24 percent in 1968 to 19 percent in 1973.

Table 8. YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY FEMALE FAMILY HEADS, BY AGE AND RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Years of school completed and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female heads	6,607	5,580	4,196	1,027	1,384	18.4	33.0
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	1,775	1,782	1,979	-7	-197	-0.4	-10.0
High school: 1 to 3 years	1,508	1,257	864	251	393	20.0	45.5
4 years	2,332	1,791	865	541	926	30.2	107.1
College: 1 to 3 years	612	468	300	144	168	30.8	56.0
4 or more years	381	283	189	98	94	34.6	49.7
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	26.9	31.9	47.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
High school: 1 to 3 years	22.8	22.5	20.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 years	35.3	32.1	20.6	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
College: 1 to 3 years	9.3	8.4	7.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 or more years	5.8	5.1	4.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	4,672	4,185	3,306	487	879	11.6	26.6
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	1,211	1,238	1,450	-27	-212	-2.2	-14.6
High school: 1 to 3 years	897	817	661	80	156	9.8	23.6
4 years	1,779	1,465	754	314	711	21.4	94.3
College: 1 to 3 years	471	399	272	72	127	18.0	46.7
4 or more years	314	265	170	49	95	18.5	55.9
Negro female heads	1,822	1,349	890	473	459	35.1	51.6
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	539	526	529	13	-3	2.5	-0.6
High school: 1 to 3 years	579	430	203	149	227	34.7	111.8
4 years	514	317	111	197	206	62.1	185.6
College: 1 to 3 years	135	63	28	72	35	(B)	(B)
4 or more years	55	15	19	40	-4	(B)	(B)
All female heads under 45 years old	3,292	2,432	1,607	860	825	35.4	51.3
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	459	398	178	61	-80	15.3	-16.7
High school: 1 to 3 years	919	727	454	192	273	26.4	60.1
4 years	1,407	970	484	437	486	45.1	100.4
College: 1 to 3 years	350	243	125	107	118	44.0	94.4
4 or more years	158	96	66	62	30	64.6	45.5
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	13.9	16.4	29.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
High school: 1 to 3 years	27.9	29.9	28.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 years	42.7	39.9	30.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
College: 1 to 3 years	10.6	10.0	7.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 or more years	4.8	3.9	4.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	2,062	1,620	1,135	442	485	27.3	42.7
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	273	235	273	38	-38	16.2	-13.9
High school: 1 to 3 years	469	395	301	74	94	18.7	31.2
4 years	950	708	398	242	310	34.2	77.9
College: 1 to 3 years	246	194	107	52	87	26.8	81.3
4 or more years	124	87	56	37	31	42.5	(B)
Negro female heads	1,162	793	472	369	321	46.5	68.0
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	183	159	205	24	-46	15.1	-22.4
High school: 1 to 3 years	131	327	153	104	174	31.8	113.7
4 years	422	258	86	164	172	63.6	200.0
College: 1 to 3 years	98	43	18	55	25	(B)	(B)
4 or more years	28	7	10	21	-3	(B)	(B)

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 8. YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY FEMALE FAMILY HEADS, BY AGE AND RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960—Continued

(Numbers in thousands)

Years of school completed and race of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All female heads 45 years and over	3,315	3,148	2,590	167	558	5.3	21.5
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	1,316	1,384	1,501	-68	-117	-4.9	-7.8
High school: 1 to 3 years	589	530	410	59	120	11.1	29.3
4 years	925	821	381	104	440	12.7	115.5
College: 1 to 3 years	262	225	175	37	50	16.4	28.6
4 or more years	223	187	123	36	64	19.3	52.0
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	39.7	44.0	58.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
High school: 1 to 3 years	17.8	16.8	15.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 years	27.9	26.1	14.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
College: 1 to 3 years	7.9	7.1	6.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
4 or more years	6.7	5.9	4.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	2,610	2,565	2,173	45	392	1.8	18.0
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	938	1,003	1,177	-65	-174	-6.5	-14.8
High school: 1 to 3 years	428	422	360	6	62	1.4	17.2
4 years	829	757	356	72	401	9.5	112.6
College: 1 to 3 years	225	205	165	20	40	9.8	24.2
4 or more years	190	178	115	12	63	6.7	54.8
Negro female heads	660	556	417	104	139	18.7	33.3
Elementary: 0 to 8 years	356	367	324	-11	43	-3.0	13.3
High school: 1 to 3 years	148	103	50	45	53	43.7	(B)
4 years	92	59	25	33	34	(B)	(B)
College: 1 to 3 years	37	20	10	17	10	(B)	(B)
4 or more years	27	8	8	19	-	(B)	(B)

- Represents zero. B Base less than 75,000. X Not applicable.

Table 9. MOBILITY OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES AND FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BETWEEN MARCH 1970 AND MARCH 1973 BY AGE OF HEAD

(Numbers in thousands. Primary families only)

Type of family and age of head	Total 1973		Percent residentially mobile	Percent moving within the county	Percent moving between counties	Percent moving between States	Abroad on March 1, 1970 or no report
	Number	Percent					
All husband-wife families	46,299	100.0	32.5	19.3	13.3	6.7	4.1
14 to 24 years	3,448	100.0	85.1	51.4	33.7	16.5	7.7
25 to 34 years	10,387	100.0	56.5	33.0	23.5	11.7	5.3
35 to 44 years	9,177	100.0	28.9	16.4	12.5	6.7	3.6
45 to 64 years	17,188	100.0	16.4	10.2	6.3	3.1	3.2
65 years and over	6,099	100.0	12.9	7.7	5.2	2.6	3.4
All families with female heads	6,534	100.0	35.3	25.2	10.1	4.9	3.8
14 to 24 years	576	100.0	77.1	55.2	21.9	9.5	5.2
25 to 34 years	1,362	100.0	60.5	40.3	20.2	10.2	4.3
35 to 44 years	1,287	100.0	34.7	24.2	10.4	5.1	4.0
45 to 64 years	2,139	100.0	22.6	17.9	4.7	2.2	3.7
65 years and over	1,170	100.0	9.2	7.1	2.1	1.1	2.5

Table 10. DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BY RACE AND METROPOLITAN-NONMETROPOLITAN RESIDENCE: 1973, 1970, AND 1968

(Numbers in thousands)

Residence and race of head	1973	1970[1]	1968[1]	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1968 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1968 to 1970
All female heads	6,607	5,580	5,333	1,027	247	18.4	4.6
In metropolitan areas	4,887	4,046	3,904	841	142	20.8	3.6
Central cities	2,951	2,455	2,437	496	18	20.2	0.7
Ring	1,936	1,590	1,467	346	123	21.8	8.4
Not in metropolitan areas	1,720	1,535	1,429	185	106	12.1	7.4
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
In metropolitan areas	74.0	72.5	73.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Central cities	44.7	44.0	45.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Ring	29.3	28.5	27.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Not in metropolitan areas	26.0	27.5	26.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White female heads	4,672	4,185	4,008	487	177	11.6	4.4
In metropolitan areas	3,331	2,980	2,902	351	78	11.8	2.7
Central cities	1,648	1,565	1,591	83	-26	5.3	-1.6
Ring	1,683	1,415	1,311	268	104	18.9	7.9
Not in metropolitan areas	1,341	1,205	1,106	136	99	11.3	9.0
Negro female heads	1,822	1,349	1,272	473	77	35.1	6.1
In metropolitan areas	1,480	1,032	972	448	60	43.4	6.2
Central cities	1,265	862	814	403	48	46.8	5.9
Ring	216	170	158	46	12	27.1	7.6
Not in metropolitan areas	342	317	300	25	17	7.9	5.7

X Not applicable.

[1]Data from March 1970 and 1968 Current Population Survey have been redistributed to reflect the 1970 census redefinition of metropolitan-nonmetropolitan areas.

IV. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Trends in the various demographic characteristics of female family heads are especially important in the context of the economic conditions in which these women and their family members live. This section presents data on trends in amount of income received, sources of income, and labor force participation of female family heads and low-income status of the members of their families.

The median income (in terms of constant 1972 dollars) for families headed by women increased between 1959 and 1969 but decreased between 1969 and 1972. Moreover, since 1959, the ratio of the median income for these families to the median income for all families has declined. In 1959 the median income for families with female heads was about 54 percent as large as that for all families, but by 1972 this ratio had declined to 48 percent.

Overall, Negro families headed by women experienced a larger proportional increase in income between 1959 and 1972 than their white family counterparts. However, in 1972 the median income for Negro families with female heads was still only 52 percent as great as that for white families with female heads.

In 1969 about 31 percent of the families with a female head derived income from earnings only, 47 percent had income both from earnings and other sources, and 18 percent relied entirely on income other than earnings for subsistence (table 12). Sources of income other than earnings include Social Security payments, public assistance payments, interest, dividends, rental income, etc. About 11 percent of all families with female heads reported that they had received all of their income from Social Security and/or public assistance payments. The majority of the recipients of public assistance in the United States in 1973 were persons receiving Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC). Further, the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Social and Rehabilitation Service estimates that three-fourths of the 2.5 million families receiving AFDC payments in 1973 were families with female heads. Another form of income maintainance, not included in income statistics, is that of food stamp assistance. Results of a special survey completed in June 1973 indicate that approximately 20 percent of female-headed families received food stamps during May of 1973.

Among white families headed by women about 29 percent reported incomes solely from earnings, whereas 36 percent of the Negro families reported income from earnings only. About 18 percent of the Negro families received all of their income from Social Security and/or public assistance payments as compared to 8 percent of the white families.

More than one-half of all female family heads worked at some time during 1972 (table 13). Most of these women worked at full-time jobs with about three-fourths of the full-time workers having worked more than 40 weeks during the year. About 42 percent of the female family heads did not work during 1972. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 9 out of every 10 female family heads who did not work in 1972 were not actively seeking employment during that period.

Table 14 shows that in 1972 a smaller proportion of mothers who were wives of heads of families were in the labor force (41 percent) than mothers who were heads of families (57 percent). This pattern was found among white women but not Negro women. Thus, among white wives who were mothers, about 39 percent were in the labor force, whereas among white female heads of families 61 percent of the mothers were in the labor force. By contrast, 55 percent of the Negro mothers who were wives were in the labor force in 1972, but only 50 percent of the Negro mothers who were family heads were in the labor force.

Negro families had, on the average, more children under 18 years old present in the home than did white families, but within this framework, labor force participation was related to the number of children present among both white and Negro families headed by a woman. Thus, the number of children in these families averaged fewer for mothers who were in the labor force than for mothers who were not in the labor force.

About 32 percent of the employed women who were family heads in 1973 were classified as clerical and kindred workers, 29 percent were service and private household workers, 15 percent were operatives, and 12 percent were professional, technical, and kindred workers. The most noteworthy changes in the distribution of these women by major occupation group since

1960 have been the increase in the proportion who were in clerical occupations (from 26 percent to 32 percent) and the decrease in the proportion who were operatives (including factory workers) or service workers (from 48 percent to 43 percent).

The proportion of members of families headed by a woman and who were below the low-income level has decreased since 1960. Even though the declines have been pronounced for both whites and Negroes, the proportion of members below the low-income level for Negroes was twice that for whites in 1972 (table 16). Nearly one-half (49 percent) of all persons in female-headed families in 1960 were members of families whose incomes were below the low-income level for the previous year. This proportion had declined to 38 percent for the income-year 1972. However, more than one-half of the children under 18 years old in female-headed families were still below the low-income level in 1972.

The proportion of members below the low-income level in white families declined from 40 percent in 1959 to 27 percent in 1972. The proportion of related children below the low-income level in these families declined from 65 percent in 1959 to 41 percent in 1972. Among Negro family members the proportional decline was from 76 percent in 1959 to 58 percent in 1972. About 70 percent of the children in Negro female-headed families were below the low-income level in 1972, a decline from 87 percent in 1959.

Table 11. MEDIAN INCOME OF FAMILIES BY AGE, RACE, AND SEX OF HEAD: 1972, 1969, AND 1959

(In constant 1972 dollars)

Age, sex, and race of head	1972	1969	1959	Increase		Percent increase	
				1969 to 1972	1959 to 1969	1969 to 1972	1959 to 1969
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME							
All female heads	$5,342	$5,664	$4,367	$-322	$1,297	-5.7	29.7
Under 35 years	3,647	3,865	2,554	-218	1,311	-5.6	51.3
35 to 44 years	5,715	5,667	4,116	48	1,551	0.8	37.7
45 to 64 years	7,013	7,336	5,512	-323	1,824	-4.4	33.1
65 years and over	6,379	5,999	4,780	380	1,219	6.3	25.5
White female heads	6,213	6,416	5,076	-203	1,340	-3.2	26.4
Under 35 years	4,008	4,229	2,960	-221	1,269	-5.2	42.9
35 to 44 years	6,548	6,282	4,687	266	1,595	4.2	34.0
45 to 64 years	7,799	8,047	6,166	-248	1,881	-3.1	30.5
65 years and over	6,996	6,589	5,281	407	1,308	6.2	24.8
Negro female heads	3,840	3,879	2,488	-39	1,391	-1.0	55.9
Under 35 years	3,145	3,315	2,093	-170	1,222	-5.1	58.4
35 to 44 years	4,530	4,352	2,706	178	1,646	4.1	60.8
45 to 64 years	4,657	4,526	2,821	131	1,705	2.9	60.4
65 years and over	4,372	3,315	2,337	1,057	978	31.9	41.8
MEDIAN FOR FEMALE AS PERCENT OF TOTAL							
All family heads	$11,116	$10,954	$8,121	$162	$2,833	1.5	34.9
Female family heads	5,342	5,664	4,367	-322	1,297	-5.7	29.7
Percent	48.1	51.7	53.8	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White family heads	11,549	11,368	8,455	181	2,913	1.6	34.5
Female family heads	6,213	6,416	5,076	-203	1,340	-3.2	26.4
Percent	53.8	56.4	60.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Negro family heads	6,864	6,921	4,535	-57	2,386	-0.8	52.6
Female family heads	3,840	3,879	2,488	-39	1,391	-1.0	55.9
Percent	55.9	56.0	54.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

X Not applicable.

Table 12. SOURCE OF INCOME IN 1969 FOR FAMILIES HEADED BY A FEMALE, BY RACE OF HEAD

Type of income	All races		White		Negro	
	Number (thousands)	Median income (dollars)	Number (thousands)	Median income (dollars)	Number (thousands)	Median income (dollars)
All families with female heads	5,515	$4,969	4,115	$5,636	1,334	$3,414
With income:						
With earnings only	1,692	5,358	1,192	5,740	480	4,459
Wage and salary only	1,601	5,285	1,116	5,659	466	4,435
Self employed only	26	4,791	21	5,198	4	3,105
Wage and salary and self employment	66	8,270	54	8,537	11	6,861
With earnings and other income	2,614	6,637	2,084	7,261	502	4,287
With other income only	994	2,314	692	2,492	290	1,984
Social security income only	169	1,734	131	1,734	37	1,733
Public assistance income only	339	1,930	161	1,918	172	1,943
All other income only	89	2,654	72	2,830	15	2,045
With social security and public assistance income	87	1,990	54	1,977	32	2,003
With social security and other income	230	3,892	217	3,977	12	2,398
With public assistance and other income	45	2,492	28	2,490	17	2,534
With all three types of other income	35	3,540	28	3,658	7	3,102
With no income	21/	(X)	14/	(X)	62	(X)

X Not applicable.

Table 13. WORK EXPERIENCE OF FEMALE FAMILY HEADS DURING 1972

(Numbers in thousands)

Work experience in 1972	Number			Percent		
	All races	White	Negro	All races	White	Negro
Total female heads	6,607	4,672	1,822	100.0	100.0	100.0
Worked during 1972	3,824	2,791	986	57.9	59.7	54.1
Full-time weeks worked	3,050	2,258	752	46.2	48.3	41.3
50 to 52 weeks	2,074	1,561	480	31.4	33.4	26.3
40 to 49 weeks	277	212	61	4.2	4.5	3.3
27 to 39 weeks	220	165	55	3.3	3.5	3.0
1 to 26 weeks	478	319	156	7.2	6.8	8.6
Part-time weeks worked	774	533	234	11.7	11.4	12.8
50 to 52 weeks	272	186	85	4.1	4.0	4.7
40 to 49 weeks	90	69	19	1.4	1.5	1.0
27 to 39 weeks	80	58	19	1.2	1.2	1.0
1 to 26 weeks	333	220	111	5.0	4.7	6.1
Did not work during 1972	2,783	1,881	836	42.1	40.3	45.9

Table 14. FAMILIES WITH OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD BY TYPE OF FAMILY, LABOR FORCE STATUS OF MOTHER, AND RACE: 1970 AND 1972

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of family, labor force status of mother and race	1970		1972	
	Number with own children under 18 years old	Average number of children per family	Number with own children under 18 years old	Average number of children per family
ALL FAMILIES				
Husband-wife families	25,547	2.29	25,482	2.22
Mothers in labor force	10,210	2.15	10,354	2.10
Percent of total	40.0	(X)	40.6	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	15,337	2.37	15,128	2.31
Female family heads	2,924	2.29	3,598	2.20
Mothers in labor force	1,731	2.06	2,062	1.96
Percent of total	59.2	(X)	57.3	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	1,192	2.63	1,536	2.53
WHITE				
Husband-wife families	23,285	2.25	23,219	2.19
Mothers in labor force	8,970	2.10	9,125	2.06
Percent of total	38.5	(X)	39.3	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	14,315	2.34	14,094	2.27
Female family heads	1,994	2.06	2,413	2.06
Mothers in labor force	1,237	1.88	1,470	1.56
Percent of total	62.0	(X)	60.9	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	757	2.34	943	2.36
NEGRO				
Husband-wife families	2,001	2.67	2,302	2.54
Mothers in labor force	1,120	2.51	1,106	2.36
Percent of total	56.0	(X)	55.2	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	881	2.87	896	2.76
Female family heads	912	2.77	1,144	2.50
Mothers in labor force	485	2.48	571	2.13
Percent of total	53.2	(X)	49.9	(X)
Mothers not in labor force	427	3.10	573	2.81

X Not applicable.

Table 15. MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP OF EMPLOYED FEMALE FAMILY HEADS: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Occupation and race	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All employed female heads	3,274	2,916	2,015	358	901	12.3	44.7
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	397	376	219	21	157	5.6	71.7
Managers and administrators, except farm	162	139	102	23	37	16.5	36.3
Sales workers	143	159	126	-16	33	-10.1	26.2
Clerical and kindred workers	1,040	873	521	167	352	19.1	67.6
Craftsmen and kindred workers	51	91	31	-40	60	-44.0	(B)
Operatives and transport equipment operatives	480	477	349	3	128	0.6	36.7
Laborers, except farm	29	35	20	-6	15	(B)	(B)
Farmers and farm managers	9	12	24	-3	-12	(B)	(B)
Farm laborers and farm foremen	25	15	15	10	-	(B)	(B)
Service and private household workers	939	741	608	198	133	26.7	21.9
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	12.1	12.9	10.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Managers and administrators, except farm	4.9	4.8	5.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Sales workers	4.4	5.5	6.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Clerical and kindred workers	31.8	29.9	25.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Craftsmen and kindred workers	1.6	3.1	1.5	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Operatives and transport equipment operatives	14.7	16.4	17.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Laborers, except farm	0.9	1.2	1.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Farmers and farm managers	0.3	0.4	1.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Farm laborers and farm foremen	0.8	0.5	0.7	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Service and private household workers	28.7	25.4	30.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White employed female heads	2,439	2,231	1,584	208	647	9.3	40.8
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	311	312	195	-1	117	-0.3	60.0
Managers and administrators, except farm	144	127	97	17	30	13.4	30.9
Sales workers	136	144	119	-8	25	-5.6	21.0
Clerical and kindred workers	851	750	487	101	263	13.5	54.0
Craftsmen and kindred workers	42	77	27	-35	50	-45.5	(B)
Operatives and transport equipment operatives	373	365	285	8	80	2.2	28.1
Laborers, except farm	24	25	15	-1	10	(B)	(B)
Farmers and farm managers	9	11	19	-2	-8	(B)	(B)
Farm laborers and farm foremen	10	7	5	3	2	(B)	(B)
Service and private household workers	541	413	335	128	78	31.0	23.3
Negro employed female heads	788	654	431	134	223	20.5	51.7
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	81	59	24	22	35	(B)	(B)
Managers and administrators, except farm	18	11	5	7	6	(B)	(B)
Sales workers	8	14	7	-6	7	(B)	(B)
Clerical and kindred workers	173	114	34	59	80	51.8	(B)
Craftsmen and kindred workers	8	12	4	-4	8	(B)	(B)
Operatives and transport equipment operatives	106	106	64	-	42	-	(B)
Laborers, except farm	4	10	5	-6	5	(B)	(B)
Farmers and farm managers	-	1	5	-1	-4	(B)	(B)
Farm laborers and farm foremen	10	8	10	2	-2	(B)	(B)
Service and private household workers	381	319	273	62	46	19.4	16.8

- Represents zero.
B Base less than 75,000.
X Not applicable.

Table 16. PERCENT OF PERSONS BELOW THE LOW-INCOME LEVEL IN FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS, BY FAMILY STATUS AND RACE: 1972, 1969, AND 1959

Family status and race	1972	1969	1959	Change	
				1969 to 1972	1959 to 1969
All persons in families with female heads	38.2	38.2	49.4	-	-11.2
Head	32.7	32.7	42.6	-	-9.9
Related children under 18 years	53.1	54.4	72.2	-1.3	-17.8
Other family members	17.0	17.5	24.0	-0.5	-6.5
Persons in families with white female heads	27.4	29.1	40.2	-1.7	-11.1
Head	24.3	25.7	34.8	-1.4	-9.1
Related children under 18 years	41.1	45.2	64.6	-4.1	-19.4
Other family members	10.2	12.4	17.9	-2.2	-5.5
Persons in families with Negro female heads	58.1	57.8	75.6	0.3	-17.8
Head	53.3	53.1	72.0	0.2	-18.9
Related children under 18 years	69.5	67.6	86.5	1.9	-18.9
Other family members	33.4	34.5	50.7	-1.1	-16.2

- Represents zero.

V. HOUSING

The economic conditions under which people live generally dictate their ability to own or rent their living quarters. About one-half of all female family heads owned (or were in the process of buying) their own homes in 1970 and about one-half rented their living quarters. These proportions have not changed significantly since 1960. In 1970, younger female heads (under 45 years old) were less likely to be home owners (33 percent) than their older counterparts, 64 percent of whom were owners. A much larger proportion of the older women than of the younger women were widows.

Among white families in 1970, 56 percent of the female heads were owners with 40 percent of those under 45 years old being owners and 68 percent of those 45 years or older. Only about 30 percent of all Negro female heads owned their homes, 19 percent of those under 45, and 46 percent of those 45 years or older. The distribution of owners and renters for both whites and Negroes remained essentially unchanged between 1960 and 1970.

For those families with a female head in 1970 who rented their homes, the amount of rent paid relative to the income level of these families was much higher for families below the low-income level than for families above the low-income level. About 62 percent of all renter families headed by a woman had incomes above the low-income level. Forty-five percent of these families paid less than 20 percent of their total incomes for rent. But, among those families whose incomes were below the low-income level 5 percent paid less than 20 percent of their incomes for rent, whereas 75 percent paid 35 percent or more for housing. This inverse relationship between income level and rent-income ratio holds for both white and Negro renter families, with a higher proportion of white low-income families (81 percent) paying 35 percent or more of their incomes for rent than Negro low-income families (69 percent). However, 54 percent of the Negro renter families were low-income families whereas only 30 percent of the white renters were low-income families.

Table 17. TENURE OF FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS BY RACE AND AGE OF HEAD: 1970 AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Tenure and race of head	1970	1960	Increase 1960 to 1970	Percent increase 1960 to 1970
All female heads	5,515	4,196	1,319	31.4
Owner	2,730	2,153	577	26.8
Percent owner	49.5	51.3	(X)	(X)
Renter	2,785	2,044	741	36.3
Under 45 years old	2,543	1,607	936	58.2
Owner	838	514	324	63.0
Percent owner	33.0	32.0	(X)	(X)
Renter	1,706	1,092	614	56.2
45 years and over	2,971	2,590	381	14.7
Owner	1,892	1,639	253	15.4
Percent owner	63.7	63.3	(X)	(X)
Renter	1,079	951	128	13.5
White female heads	4,115	3,306	809	24.5
Owner	2,306	1,878	428	22.8
Percent owner	56.0	56.8	(X)	(X)
Renter	1,809	1,428	381	26.7
Under 45 years old	1,711	1,134	577	50.9
Owner	677	436	241	55.3
Percent owner	39.6	38.4	(X)	(X)
Renter	1,034	698	336	48.1
45 years and over	2,404	2,172	232	10.7
Owner	1,629	1,443	186	12.9
Percent owner	67.8	66.4	(X)	(X)
Renter	776	730	46	6.3
Negro female heads	1,334	890	444	49.9
Owner	396	274	122	44.5
Percent owner	29.7	30.8	(X)	(X)
Renter	937	616	321	52.1
Under 45 years old	795	473	322	68.1
Owner	149	78	71	91.0
Percent owner	18.7	16.5	(X)	(X)
Renter	646	394	252	64.0
45 years and over	539	418	121	28.9
Owner	248	196	52	26.5
Percent owner	46.0	46.9	(X)	(X)
Renter	292	222	70	31.5

X Not applicable.

Table 18. GROSS RENT-INCOME RATIO FOR FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEADS IN RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS BY LOW-INCOME STATUS AND RACE OF HEAD: 1970

(Numbers in thousands)

Low-income level and rent-income ratio	All races	White	Negro
Income above low-income level	1,524	1,127	379
Gross rent-income ratio:			
Less than 20 percent	690	503	179
20 to 24 percent	262	190	69
25 to 34 percent	323	242	78
35 percent or more	249	192	53
Income below low-income level	945	482	450
Gross rent-income ratio:			
Less than 20 percent	49	15	34
20 to 24 percent	50	19	31
25 to 34 percent	137	61	75
35 percent or more	709	388	310
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION			
Income above low-income level	100.0	100.0	100.0
Gross rent-income ratio:			
Less than 20 percent	45.3	44.6	47.2
20 to 24 percent	17.2	16.9	18.2
25 to 34 percent	21.2	21.5	20.6
35 percent or more	16.3	17.0	14.0
Income below low-income level	100.0	100.0	100.0
Gross rent-income ratio:			
Less than 20 percent	5.2	3.1	7.6
20 to 24 percent	5.3	3.9	6.9
24 to 34 percent	14.5	12.7	16.7
35 percent or more	75.0	80.5	68.9

VI. PRIMARY INDIVIDUALS AND SUBFAMILIES

Thus far, this report has dealt exclusively with women who head families, however, a great many women in the United States head households but have no relatives living with them. In 1973, there were about 8.9 million of these female primary individuals, nine of every ten of whom maintained their own homes while living entirely alone. Between 1960 and 1970, the proportional increase for this group was more than twice that for all household heads and substantially higher than for all household heads between 1970 and 1973. These women represented about 9 percent of household heads in 1960 and 13 percent of all household heads in 1973. More than one-half of the female primary individuals were elderly (65 years old and over) and about 61 percent were widowed and 22 percent had never married.

Another classification into which some women fall is that of a subfamily head. Subfamilies are defined as a married couple with or without children, or one parent with one or more single children under 18 years old, living in a household and related to, but not including the head of the household or his wife. The number of subfamilies is not included in the number of families. A larger proportion of all subfamilies are accounted for by female-headed subfamilies than in the past. The proportion of female-headed subfamilies to all subfamilies increased from 35 percent in 1960 to 46 percent in 1973.

Table 19. FEMALE PRIMARY INDIVIDUALS AS PROPORTION OF ALL HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY AGE AND RACE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Type of unit and race and sex of head	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
All household heads	68,251	63,573	52,809	4,678	10,764	7.4	20.4
Female primary individuals	8,858	7,801	4,979	1,057	2,822	13.5	56.7
Percent of all heads	13.0	12.3	9.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living alone	8,239	7,150	4,436	1,089	2,714	15.2	61.2
Percent of female primary individuals	93.0	91.7	89.1	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
White household heads	60,618	56,663	47,759	3,955	8,904	7.0	18.6
Female primary individuals	7,901	6,980	4,473	921	2,507	13.2	56.0
Percent of all heads	13.0	12.3	9.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living alone	(NA)	6,425	4,015	(NA)	2,410	(NA)	60.0
Percent of female primary individuals	(NA)	92.0	89.8	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)
Negro household heads	6,809	6,240	5,050	569	1,190	9.1	23.6
Female primary individuals	879	764	506	115	258	15.1	51.0
Percent of all heads	12.9	12.2	10.0	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Living alone	(NA)	675	421	(NA)	254	(NA)	60.3
Percent of female primary individuals	(NA)	88.3	83.2	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)

NA Not available.
X Not applicable.

Table 20. CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE PRIMARY INDIVIDUALS: MARCH 1973

(Numbers in thousands)

Race and marital status	Total	14 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55 to 64	65 years and over
Race						
Total	8,856	615	582	1,769	1,821	4,568
White	7,901	542	483	1,044	1,593	4,238
Negro	878	60	82	210	208	317
Other	77	13	17	15	20	13
Marital Status						
Total	8,856	615	582	1,269	1,821	4,568
Married, spouse absent	517	46	54	165	129	123
Widowed	5,423	3	10	341	1,191	3,878
Divorced	1,002	29	85	430	282	176
Single	1,914	537	435	333	219	392
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION						
Race						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	89.2	88.1	83.0	82.3	87.5	92.8
Negro	9.9	9.8	14.1	16.5	11.4	6.9
Other	0.9	2.1	2.9	1.2	1.1	0.3
Marital Status						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Married, spouse absent	5.8	7.5	9.3	13.0	7.1	2.7
Widowed	61.2	0.5	1.7	26.9	65.4	84.9
Divorced	11.3	4.7	14.6	33.9	15.5	3.9
Single	21.6	87.3	74.7	26.2	12.0	8.6

Table 21. SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBFAMILIES HEADED BY A FEMALE: 1973, 1970, AND 1960

(Numbers in thousands)

Subject	1973	1970	1960	Increase		Percent increase	
				1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1973	1960 to 1970
Total subfamilies	1,250	1,150	1,511	100	-361	8.7	-23.9
Subfamilies with female heads	573	483	528	90	-45	18.6	-8.5
Percent of all subfamilies	45.8	42.0	34.9	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Marital status of female subfamily heads:							
Married, spouse absent	258	284	304	-26	-20	-9.2	-6.6
Separated	182	190	188	-8	2	-4.2	1.1
Other	76	94	116	-18	-22	-19.1	-19.0
Widowed	38	38	47	-	-9	(B)	(B)
Divorced	174	152	177	22	-25	14.5	-14.1
Single	103	14	-	89	-	(B)	-
Age of female subfamily heads:							
Under 20 years	75	43	46	32	-3	(B)	(B)
20 to 24 years	184	170	134	14	36	8.2	26.9
25 to 34 years	179	144	186	35	-42	24.3	-22.6
35 to 44 years	83	77	122	6	-45	7.8	-36.9
45 to 64 years	53	48	39	5	9	(B)	(B)
65 years or more	-	1	1	-1	-	(B)	(B)
Average number of own children under 18	1.60	1.59	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)	(NA)
White subfamilies	922	866	(NA)	56	(NA)	6.5	(NA)
Subfamilies with female heads	356	332	(NA)	24	(NA)	7.2	(NA)
Percent of all subfamilies	38.6	38.3	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)	(NA)
Marital status of female subfamily heads:							
Married, spouse absent	156	167	(NA)	-11	(NA)	-6.6	(NA)
Separated	106	93	(NA)	13	(NA)	14.0	(NA)
Other	50	74	(NA)	-24	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Widowed	24	31	(NA)	-7	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Divorced	143	132	(NA)	11	(NA)	8.3	(NA)
Single	32	7	(NA)	25	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Age of female subfamily heads:							
Under 20 years	49	27	(NA)	22	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
20 to 24 years	119	120	(NA)	-1	(NA)	-0.8	(NA)
25 to 34 years	110	105	(NA)	5	(NA)	4.8	(NA)
35 to 44 years	44	51	(NA)	-7	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
45 to 64 years	33	28	(NA)	5	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
65 years or more	-	1	(NA)	-1	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Average number of own children under 18	1.48	1.41	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)	(NA)
Negro subfamilies	311	268	(NA)	43	(NA)	16.0	(NA)
Subfamilies with female heads	213	148	(NA)	65	(NA)	43.9	(NA)
Percent of all subfamilies	68.5	55.2	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)	(NA)
Marital status of female subfamily heads:							
Married, spouse absent	100	114	(NA)	-14	(NA)	-12.3	(NA)
Separated	76	95	(NA)	-19	(NA)	-20.0	(NA)
Other	24	19	(NA)	5	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Widowed	14	7	(NA)	7	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Divorced	28	20	(NA)	8	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Single	71	7	(NA)	64	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Age of female subfamily heads:							
Under 20 years	25	16	(NA)	9	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
20 to 24 years	64	50	(NA)	14	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
25 to 34 years	64	38	(NA)	26	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
35 to 44 years	38	26	(NA)	12	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
45 to 64 years	20	18	(NA)	2	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
65 years or more	-	-	(NA)	-	(NA)	(B)	(NA)
Average number of own children under 18	1.86	1.88	(NA)	(X)	(NA)	(X)	(NA)

- Represents zero.
B Base less than 75,000.
NA Not available.
X Not applicable.

REFERENCES FOR TABLES

Table

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6. Same as table 3.
7. For 1973--Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 255. For 1970--Census of Population, Final Report, PC(2)-4B. For 1960--Census of Population, Final Report, PC(2)-4B.
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